

charge of the work, in just a few days Fidler developed a high-twist manila twine. Sent to Texas for immediate trial, the telegram came back, "Manila splendid."

Deering's success with the twine binder redefined the industry; demand for the wire binder collapsed; it was out of production by 1885. The Deering firm probably, briefly, surpassed McCormick. Deering continued to rely heavily on innovation to compete. He sought to develop (unsuccessfully) alternative, cheaper fibers—e.g., cotton, hemp, saw grass, flax—for use in binder twine. In the early 1890s Deering was the first to offer an all-steel binder, to use roller and ball bearings, and to offer farmers a "light" binder. Deering was the first to recognize the opportunity of line extension, that is, making and selling other harvesting equipment under the Deering name; it began with corn binders (harvesters) and hayrakes. Deering also led the industry in vertical integration, first with its own twine mill in 1886 to assure availability of the high-quality twines critical to the smooth operation of its machines, then with acquisition of its own steel mill and iron ore lands in the Masabi range, and by coking coal in Harlan County, Kentucky, by 1901. Deering was also the first to establish its own Canadian factory from which to supply the important and growing Canadian market. Symbolic of Deering's interest in innovation was his development, in 1894, of an automower; that is, a mower driven by an internal combustion engine. He later exhibited it with great fanfare at the great Paris Exposition of 1900.

As persistent and successful as Deering was with design innovation and vertical integration, he was less interested in production process and marketing. Deering never matched McCormick's low production costs and lagged behind McCormick by nearly a decade in establishing a credible European marketing organization (from 1892). Domestically, he sold farmers' notes to bankers for collection (unlike McCormick), thereby putting his goodwill at risk when those bankers pressed collections. As a result, by 1902 Deering, though holding perhaps 30 percent of the total market, had only three-quarters the sales of McCormick.

Deering had taken his two sons, James E. Deering and Charles W. Deering, into the business in 1880 and later brought in his son-in-law Richard F. Howe. But none were strong managers, and in 1898 he offered to sell his company to the McCormicks. They declined, because of the price asked and because they did not believe that they could alone manage effectively so large a company. In 1900 further negotiations came to nothing. In early 1902 Judge Elbert Gary, who had been the Deerings' chief legal counsel in the 1890s and was now chairman of the newly created United States Steel Corporation, urged renewed negotiations. Gary believed his company was threatened by the Deering expansion into iron, coal, and steel and feared McCormick would follow their lead, eroding U.S. Steel's dominance. Initially they made little progress; but at the urging of John D. Rockefeller, both sides turned to J. P. Morgan partner George W. Perkins. Perkins quickly succeeded; in August 1902 the five leading

harvester manufacturers (McCormick, Deering, Plano, Champion, and Milwaukee) merged to create International Harvester. With the merger, Deering, who had been seriously ill in 1901, withdrew from management. (Enmity between the McCormicks and the younger Deerings continued for years, with the Deerings even apparently attempting to instigate a government antitrust suit in 1908 to break up the company and thus regain their firm.)

Deering performed limited public service, serving on the councils of two Maine governors in 1870–1873, as a director of the Metropolitan Bank of Chicago, as president of the Garrett Biblical Institute Trustees from 1887 to 1899, and as president of Board of Trustees of Northwestern University. He made large gifts to Northwestern, Garrett, and Wesley Hospital; he built and endowed the Deering School in Lake Bluff, Illinois. He died at his winter home in Coconut Grove, Florida.

• Some papers relating to the Deering Company are in the McCormick Collections at State Historical Society of Wisconsin, and a small collection of Deering correspondence is at the Garrett Theological Seminary. The following have a limited amount of material on Deering: Fred V. Carstensen, "' . . . A Dishonest Man Is at Least Prudent.' George W. Perkins and the International Harvester Steel Properties," *Business and Economic History* 2d ser., 9 (1980): 87–102; *William Deering* (1914); Deering Harvester Company, *Official Retrospective Exhibition of the Development of Harvesting Machinery* (1900); Esko Heikkonen, *Reaping the Bounty: McCormick Harvesting Machine Company Turns Abroad, 1878–1902* (1995); William T. Hutchinson, *Cyrus Hall McCormick: Harvester, 1856–1884* (1935); and John F. Steward, *The Reaper* (1931). Obituaries are in the *Chicago Evening Post* and the *Chicago American*, both 10 Dec. 1913, and the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 11 Dec. 1913.

FRED CARSTENSEN

DEETER, Jasper (31 July 1893–31 May 1972), theater actor, director, producer, and teacher, was born in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, the son of Jasper Newton Deeter, a successful businessman, and Sarah Mather, a singer and voice teacher. As a boy Deeter participated in amateur dramatics at the local Episcopal church. At Conway Hall prep school in Carlisle (Penn.), he performed in two school productions before graduating in 1911. Deeter withdrew from Lafayette College during his first term upon discovering that freshmen were denied participation in dramatics. In 1913, while working as a reporter and copyreader for the Harrisburg *Patriot*, he enrolled in Dickinson College, which he attended until 1915, never completing a degree. From 1910 to 1920 Deeter spent his summers at Lake Chautauqua in New York, studying interpretation and expression of, in his words, the "masterpieces of the drama" with his "great teacher" Silas Clark, the father of drama scholar Barrett Clark. Before moving to New York in 1918 to pursue an acting career, Deeter played in vaudeville in Chicago and worked in restaurants and for the Chicago news bureau.

Deeter's initial New York engagement was for actor/managers Charles and Ivah Coburn at the Greenwich Village Theatre in 1918, acting in a mob scene in *The Better 'Ole*. According to Sherwood Anderson in an article for *Esquire* (Oct. 1936), when the production "went up town and began to make money, Jap [nickname for Jasper] . . . began to ad lib. He made cracks about underpaid actors" and was fired from the play.

Deeter auditioned for the Provincetown Players on Macdougall Street in New York City and, accepted for their fifth season in 1919, was cast in every bill. In 1920 he played the lead in Eugene O'Neill's suicide drama *Exorcism* (later destroyed by the author). For the 1920-1921 season Deeter debuted the role of the Cockney trader Smithers (a part he played more than 200 times) in O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones*, with Charles Gilpin, on Deeter's solicitation, in the title role.

The Provincetown Players assigned Deeter to codirect *The Spring* in 1920 with the play's author, George Cram Cook. Deeter's recognized skill as a director then prompted the Provincetown to offer him the premiere of Susan Glaspell's *Inheritors* in 1921, in which he gave Ann Harding her first role, the play's leading part. The production was well received. On tour with *The Emperor Jones*, Deeter was soon dismissed from the Provincetown, stemming from his previous opposition to extending the production for a run on Broadway and then on tour. He subsequently joined a group in Chicago that was touring two plays by Henrik Ibsen, *The Master Builder* and *Ghosts*. In 1922 Deeter returned to the Provincetown at O'Neill's request to create sound effects for O'Neill's *The Hairy Ape*. Deeter's final Provincetown assignment was to direct in 1926 Paul Green's *In Abraham's Bosom*, which won a Pulitzer Prize.

As evidenced by the controversy surrounding Deeter's dismissal from the Provincetown, he considered the New York system of long-run productions detrimental to an actor's development. He envisioned a repertory company that would perform a different play every night, where "artists might work together to produce fine plays, where their freedom to create would be restricted only by the limitations of their own skills and imaginations" (quoted in Tanner). In the spring of 1923, amidst stressful negotiations for a directing contract with the Swarthmore Chautauqua in Pennsylvania, Deeter passed through Moylan-Rose Valley, fourteen miles from Philadelphia. In the town's Guild Hall, an old mill being used for community theater, he discovered his professional home.

On 21 April 1923 Deeter presented Shaw's *Candida* at the Guild Hall and thus founded Jasper Deeter's Theatre (later Hedgerow Theatre), a 165-seat suburban playhouse destined to become cosmopolitan in artistic scope and significance. In June of that year he invited Harding to recreate her role in a revival of *Inheritors*, the themes of which, namely the struggle for quality and the search for truth, came to constitute the "Hedgerow Bible." Through 1954, except during the war years, *Inheritors* was produced annually at the

Hedgerow. Deeter's theater emerged not only as the inspiration for Eva LeGallienne's Civic Repertory Company in New York but also as the longest-running true repertory theater in the United States. By the time accumulated debts caused the Hedgerow to suspend operations in 1956, after thirty-three years under the artistic guidance of Deeter, the theater had produced 210 plays, 55 of which were either world or American premieres. The repertoire included scripts from more than a dozen countries, including five by Chekhov; seven each by Ibsen and Shakespeare; nine by O'Neill, who excused Deeter from paying royalties; and nineteen by Shaw. In 1939 Deeter produced the entirety of Shaw's *Man and Superman*, the first American production of the complete play.

Throughout Hedgerow's history, Deeter directed most of the productions and performed in nearly half of them. He maintained a company of about twenty actors, none treated as stars; they all lived in a nearby farm house, sharing the tasks of communal and theatrical life. During World War II Deeter drew national attention by petitioning the government (unsuccessfully) to exempt the Hedgerow actors from military service. Well-known actors who appeared at the Hedgerow include Richard Basehart, John Beal, Morris Carnovsky, Helen Craig, Van Heflin, Libby Holman, LeGallienne, and Sydney Machat.

As a director, Deeter was forever teaching acting to his actors. Sherwood Anderson dubbed him "a born teacher," and in 1946 Deeter officially opened a theater school to develop talent for Hedgerow and beyond. Henry Miller, who had visited Deeter at work and leisure, described Deeter as "a man who lives from the heart out" in an essay anthologized in *Remember to Remember* (1947). Moreover, Miller noted the "quiet way in which his authority communicated itself" and that "his great gift is the ability to inspire others." Even after the Hedgerow had ceased production, the Hedgerow School of Acting continued, with Deeter as head until his death in Media, Pennsylvania. In total he trained more than 700 students.

Deeter's pioneering spirit was tirelessly expansive. He enabled the Hedgerow to evolve administratively from his own operation, to a venture sharing policy decisions with the company of actors, to a cooperative run by committees, and finally in 1942 to a partnership with a board. Fiscally, his motto was "you can't budget nothing." Deeter's artistic achievement and interpersonal skills earned him contact and correspondence with notable playwrights, actors, and theatrical organizations. He also received commendation, as illustrated in a wartime letter from Irish playwright Sean O'Casey: "Long live the Abbey Theatre in Dublin! Long live the Art Theatre of Moscow! And long live the Hedgerow Theatre in the State of Pennsylvania!" Deeter was survived by his life companion Richard Brewer, whom he had met in the spring of 1953.

• The Hedgerow Theatre Collection, on permanent loan at Boston University's Twentieth Century Archives and partially on microfilm at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania,

contains photographs, woodcuts, drawings, and directorial notes of various Hedgerow productions, speeches and unpublished articles written by Deeter, and transcripts of his acting and directing classes. The collection also includes a correspondence file, scrapbooks, newsclips, and actors' biographies. A special section covers the World War II years. Notated master scripts of 120 productions remain at the Hedgerow Theatre. For a writing by Deeter see "An Interpretation," *Theatre Arts Monthly* 20, no. 7 (July 1936): 541-42. Two essays illuminating Deeter's personality are Sherwood Anderson, "Jasper Deeter: A Dedication," in his *Plays: Winesburg and Others* (1937), first published as "The Good Life at Hedgerow," *Esquire*, Oct. 1936, pp. 51, 98A-99; and Henry Miller, "Jasper Deeter and the Hedgerow Theatre," in *Remember to Remember* (1947). See also John Caley Wentz, "The Hedgerow Theatre: An Historical Study" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Pennsylvania, 1954), which contains a thorough bibliography; and Dolores Tanner, "Jasper Deeter" (M.F.A. thesis, Univ. of Texas, 1957). An obituary is in the *New York Times*, 1 June 1972.

JOANNA ROTTE

DE FONTAINE, Felix Gregory (1834-11 Dec. 1896), journalist and author, was born in Boston, Massachusetts, the son of Louis Antoine de Fontaine, a French nobleman. His mother, whose given name is unknown, had the surname Allen and was said to have been from the family of the revolutionary war patriot Ethan Allen. Young de Fontaine received his education from private tutors and later studied phonography (shorthand). At age twenty-five he became a congressional reporter in Washington and reported the trial of a congressman charged with killing another man. In 1863 he married Georgia Vigneron Moore of Charleston, South Carolina.

On the eve of the Civil War, de Fontaine moved to Charleston. Before the outbreak of fighting, the *New York Herald* published a series of his articles on the antislavery controversy in the South. In 1861 the series was published in a booklet, *A History of American Abolitionism Together with a History of the Southern Confederacy*. During the bombardment of Fort Sumter on 12 April 1861, de Fontaine used his friendship with Confederate general Pierre G. T. Beauregard to provide the *Herald* with one of the first accounts of the fighting to appear in the northern press. However, de Fontaine's sympathies apparently were with the South, and he signed on as correspondent with the *Charleston Courier*. He accompanied the First South Carolina regiment to Virginia in May 1861. For the next three years de Fontaine covered the war, writing under the pseudonym "Personne."

De Fontaine became one of the best-known and most widely respected Confederate correspondents of the war. His stories for the *Courier* were widely reprinted by many newspapers in the South. De Fontaine reported on many of the war's major land battles and campaigns, including First and Second Manassas, Shiloh, Seven Days, Antietam, Charleston, Chattanooga, and Atlanta. Probably his greatest reporting work was done in September 1862 during the battle of Antietam, one of the bloodiest battles of the war. In his account, he described the scene in front of the Confed-

erate center along a sunken road, later to become known as the "Bloody Lane." De Fontaine wrote

The air was filled with the white fantastic shapes that floated away from bursted shells. Men were leaping to and fro, loading, firing and handling the artillery, and now and then a hearty yell would reach the ear, amid the tumult, that spoke of death or disaster from some well aimed ball. . . . It is a hot place for us, but is hotter still for the enemy. They are directly under our guns, and we mow them down like grass.

De Fontaine also regularly reported on the privations of the ordinary Confederate soldier, who frequently suffered from insufficient food, clothing, and supplies. In December 1863 he described the distressing plight of troops in General James Longstreet's army, thousands of whom wintered in the rugged mountains of Tennessee with insufficient shoes: "The surface of the ground is as hard as a rock, and at every step the frozen edges of earth cut into naked feet, until the path of the army may be almost said to have been tracked in blood. To remedy the evil, I have seen these men, accustomed as they were at home to every luxury, strip their coats and blankets from their backs, and tie the rags around their feet."

In January 1864 de Fontaine became editor of the *Columbia Daily South Carolinian*, but he soon returned to the field as a correspondent for the newspaper. That year, he also published *Marginalia; or, Gleanings from an Army Note-book*, a collection of his news stories, praising the Confederate cause. In March 1865 General William T. Sherman's Union army captured Columbia and burned much of the city including the *South Carolinian's* offices. De Fontaine and his staff fled the city before Union troops arrived.

After the war, de Fontaine remained in South Carolina for several years. In 1867 he was secretary of a convention held in Columbia to consider the abuses of carpetbag rule. Eventually de Fontaine moved to New York, and for much of the remainder of his professional life he was the financial editor and later the drama and music editor of the *New York Herald*. He wrote a series of articles, "Shoulder to Shoulder, Reminiscences of Confederate Camps and Fields," for the (Charleston) *XIX Century*. In 1873 he published *Cyclopedia of the Best Thoughts of Charles Dickens*, and in 1886 he published *De Fontaine's Condensed Long-Hand and Rapid-Writer's Companion*. At the time of his death in Columbia, he was writing a book on the missing records of the Confederate cabinet.

• Collections of Felix Gregory de Fontaine's Civil War correspondence are in *Marginalia; or, Gleanings from an Army Note-book* (1864) and *Army Letters of 1861-1865* (1896-1897). Biographical information on de Fontaine is in J. Cutler Andrews, *The South Reports the Civil War* (1970), and in an obituary, *Charleston News and Courier*, 12 Dec. 1896.

FORD RISLEY

DE FOREST, Erastus Lyman (27 June 1834-6 June 1888), mathematician, was born in Watertown, Connecticut; he was the only son of Dr. John De Forest